[*Note*.—**An asterisk (*) at the commencement of a speech indicates revision by the Member.**]

II.—CALLING ATTENTION TO SHORTAGE OF ESSENTIAL DRUGS ETC,

திரு. து. ப. அழகமுத்து: கனம் சபாநாயகர் அவர்களே, “பிணியாளர்களுக்கான மயக்க மருந்துகள், ‘எக்ஸ்ரே’, எடுப்பதற்கான படச்சுருள் முதலியன போன்ற இன்றியமையா மருத்துவப் பொருள்கள், இறக்குமதிக் கட்டுப்பாடுகளின் காரணமாக எல்லா இடங்களிலும், குறிப்பாக அரசாங்க மருத்துவ மனைகளில், கிடைக்கப் பெருமையால், ஏற்பட்டுள்ள இடரான நிலைமை பற்றிய அவசரப் பொது முக்கியத்துவம் வாய்ந்த விஷயத்தைக் கனம் சுகாதார அமைச்சர் அவர்களின் கவனத்திற்குக் கொண்டு வருகிறேன்.”

* THE HON. SRIMATHI JOTHI VENCATACHELLUM : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I wish to make the following statement :—

After the declaration of Emergency, a severe restriction was placed on the import of raw materials from abroad in order to conserve foreign exchange to meet the demands of Emergency. 9-00 a.m.
Even the announcement of import policy, which is usually done on 1st of April every year, was made only on 15th October 1965 for the period April 1965 to March 1966. The new import policy was based on Mathur Committee's Report as per which ceilings were fixed for different industries and for States.

Due to the Emergency there was stock-piling of drugs by the Defence and the Government institutions. Anticipating shortages, the dealers might have also over-stocked the drugs. This has given rise to shortage of essential drugs like Antibiotics, Sulpha drugs, etc. To meet this extra demand, the Central Government allowed the import of Sulpha drugs, Vitamins, Dextrose and some other drugs which were in short supply, from rupee sources.

The Government of India are also making arrangements to import the raw materials through State Trading Corporation, New Delhi, for distribution to actual users whose past turnover was less than five lakhs of rupees. In view of the tight foreign exchange position, the import of drugs was restricted only to essential drugs numbering 49. The raw materials mentioned in the above import licences are expected to arrive shortly and relieve the slight shortage of essential drugs. Antibiotics like Penicillin, Streptomycin, etc., which are indigenously manufactured are available, although there was occasional shortage of certain proprietary brands.

Ephedrine Hydrochloride, Glycerophosphates and Calcium Gluconate were not allowed for import since they are manufactured indigenously. Of these, Ephedrine Hydrochloride is now included in the essential list of 49 items allowed for import in view of the fact that the item is still in short supply. Regarding Bismuth salts, the Drugs Controller, India. has stated that the

international price of Bismuth metal has gone up and that other antacids may be used in place of Bismuth salts which are mainly used as antacids. Accordingly import of Bismuth salts is not allowed. The hospitals have been advised to use other antacids found in National Formulary of India.

In regard to the scarcity of Vitamin C and Vitamin B-6, the import of these items was not allowed during 1964–65 import period, as the products were manufactured in India. In 1965, it was said that due to breakdown of plant and other difficulties in production, the indigenous manufacturers were not able to meet the demands of the country. To overcome this, import of these items has since been allowed from both rupee as well as general resources.

It will thus be seen that the shortage of some of the essential drugs is due to the restrictions on imports owing to difficult foreign exchange position prevailing in the country. The Drugs Controller of India was being kept informed of the various shortages and trends in prices by the Director of Medical Services of this State. The Drugs Controller, India, has also been taking necessary steps to relieve the shortage by arranging to import the drugs through rupee payment sources, etc. It is learnt that the Drugs Controller, India, is arranging through the State Trading Corporation of India Ltd., for import and distribution of essential drugs to the actual users. It is hoped that the position will improve soon, as the drugs allowed for import from rupee sources are likely to arrive shortly.

Due to present National Emergency, instructions have been issued by the Director of Medical Services to the Heads of Government medical institutions to enforce strict economy in the use of X-ray films, consistent with treatment of patients. Soon after the declaration of Emergency, the Director of Medical Services met the dealers and importers of X-ray films in her office on 14th September 1965. They expressed the difficulty that due to drastic cut in the import of the quantity of the films in the country, they could not get even fifty per cent of their indents which they had asked for and that they were unable to meet the entire demands of the Government medical institutions as well as the private institutions. Certain firms supplying films had also represented to the Director of Medical Services that it had been directed in the Import Trade Control Notice of the Ministry of Commerce, dated 14th August 1965, that the distribution of X-ray films imported by the licensees would be made on the directions of the Director-General of Health Services, New Delhi, and that the matter might be taken up with him for getting necessary orders to enable them to continue the supplies of ting necessary orders to enable hem o continue the supplies of importing. At the instance of the Director of Medical Services, the matter was taken up with the Government of India. The Drugs Controller, India, has assured that this State can get supplies of X-ray films to the extent of seventy per cent of the

15th March 1966] [Srimathi Jothi Vencatachellum]

past consumption of X-ray films. If there is any immediate requirement for the X-ray films or in cases where radiological examination and investigations are to be made for diagnostic purposes, the Heads of medical institutions have been instructed to use the films and in other cases they have been instructed to use the films with discretion and conserve them to meet the needs in times of emergency. The matter was also discussed with the Drugs Controller, India, by the Director of Medical Services, when the former was here and the requirements of X-ray films for this State were fully explained to him by the Director. The Drugs Controller has promised to look into the matter and augment the supply of films from the reserve stock to the extent possible.

III.—PRIVILEGE MATTER.

CHIEF MINISTER'S STATEMENT *RE* DETENU SRI UMANATH, M. P.

MR. SPEAKER : Hon. Member Sri K. A. Mathialagan has given notice of a matter of privilege. But, I wish to point out that according to Rule 186 of the Assembly rules a matter of privilege must be raised after the questions and before the list of business for the day is entered upon. But as soon as the questions were over, I called the item relating to the notice under Rule 41. Now, if the House is to take up the matter of privilege, the rule has to be suspended; otherwise, on some future occasion any Member may raise a point of order quoting this as a precedent. It is only a procedural matter and I hope the Hon. Leader of the House and also the House will agree to the suspension of the rule.

The hon. Member Sri Mathialagan was not in the House after question time. If I had called him to raise the privilege matter then and if he had not been in the House, what I should have done with the privilege matter is a different issue.

THE HON. SRI M. BHAKTAVATSALAM : Sir, I agree with the Hon. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER : All right. I hope the House agrees to take up the matter of privilege. The privilege matter involves subtle questions on legal aspects. Hence it is very essential that it is discussed without heat, pinpointing only the legal aspects. The hon. Member Sri K. A. Mathialagan will now speak.

SRI K. A. MATHIALAGAN : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I request your permission to raise a matter of privilege against the Hon. Chief Minister of Madras.

On 9th March 1966 when Mr. Saw. Ganesan, Leader of the Swatantra Party, called the attention of the Hon. Chief Minister to a matter of urgent public importance, viz., the charge of contempt on Madras Government in the Lok Sabha in connection with the refusal of permission to Mr. Umanath, M.P., now on